

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

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AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMA 6390

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, PE

SUBJECT: VIOLENCE AT PREPARATORY MEETING OF CONSTITUENT

ASSEMBLY JULY 18

SUMMARY. APRA FOUNDER VICTOR RAUL HAYA DE LA TORRE, WINNER OF THE LARGEST NUMBER OF PREFERENTIAL VOTES IN PERU'S CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS, PRESIDED OVER A TUMULTOUS MEETING ON JULY 18 WHICH INITIATED THE PREPARATIVE SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY AND THE SWEARING IN OF THE DELEGATES. VIOLENCE IN THE PLAZA BOLIVAR WHERE THE ASSEMBLY WAS MEETING, REPORTEDLY LEFT THREE PRESUMED DEAD. ASSEMBLY MEMBERS ADJOURNED AS POLICE WERE BREAKING UP DEMONSTRATIONS WITH TEAR GAS, CLUBS, AND FINALLY BULLETS. END SUMMARY.

1. THE ASSEMBLY'S PREPARATORY MEETING GOT UNDERWAY ABOUT MID-DAY IN THE MIDST OF A LARGE AND DEMONSTRATIVE CROWD WHICH PACKED THE PUBLIC GALLERY. OUTSIDE A GROUP OF PERHAPS 5,000 (LARGELY APRISTAS) WAS ASSEMBLED IN THE PLAZA BOLIVAR. STRIKING TEACHERS LED BY SUTEP WERE DEMONSTRATING IN ONE OF THE STREETS ENTERING THE PLAZA.

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2. AN ELECTORAL COMMISSION REPRESENTATIVE AGAIN ANNOUNCED THE OFFICIAL RESULTS OF THE JUNE 18 ELECTIONS INCLUDING THE RESULTS OF THE PREFERENTIAL VOTING. PPC LEADER LUIS BEDOYA REYES, SECOND IN PREFERENTIAL VOTES, ADMINISTERED THE OATH TO HAYA, WHO IN TURN SWORE IN BEDOYA. ACCORDING TO HISTORICAL PRECEDENT, HAYA NAMED AS TWO SECRETARIES OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE THE OLDEST DELEGATE (APART FROM HAYA HIMSELF) AND THE YOUNGEST.

APRA INTELLECTUAL LUIS ALBERTO SANCHEZ AND TWENTY NINE YEAR OLD ALAN GARCIA, ALSO OF APRA, WERE THE OLDEST AND YOUNGEST DELEGATES RESPECTIVELY. HOWEVER, LUIS ALBERTO SANCHEZ DECLINED THE NOMINATION AS SECRETARY, YIELDING TO ERNEST ALAYZA GRUNDY OF PPC (78 YEARS OLD).

3. FOCEP'S HUGO BLANCO CALLED FOR THE ASSEMBLY TO PAY FOR THE RETURN PASSAGE TO PERU OF RECENT EXILES. REPORTEDLY HAYA DE LA TORRE AGREED TO THIS PROPOSAL. BLANCO'S SUPPORTERS WERE NUMEROUS AND NOISY BOTH IN AND OUTSIDE OF THE ASSEMBLY.

4. WHILE BLANCO WAS CREATING PROBLEMS INSIDE THE ASSEMBLY A SERIOUS CONFRONTATION DEVELOPED IN THE PLAZA OUTSIDE AS THE CROWD STARTED BOOING PSR LEADER AND ASSEMBLY DELEGATE LEONIDAS RODRIGUEZ FIGUEROA AND ACCUSING HIM OF BEING A MURDERER. COCEP FOLLOWERS REPORTEDLY WERE THE INSTIGATORS OF THIS DEMONSTRATION BUT THE APRISTAS APPARENTLY JOINED IN THE DENUNCIATIONS. POLICE INTERVENTION BETWEEN THE ATTACKERS AND DEFENDERS OF RODRIGUEZ FIGUEROA REPORTEDLY RESULTED IN AT LEAST THREE PERSONS BEING SHOT AND OBSERVERS PRESUMED THEM DEAD. NEARBY, SUTEP DEMONSTRATORS APPARENTLY TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THE CONFUSION TO MOVE INTO THE PLAZA, THROWING ROCKS AND ATTACKING THE POLICE. THE VIOLENCE AND TEAR GAS OUTSIDE FINALLY CAUSED ASSEMBLY OFFICIALS TO SUSPEND THE MEETING UNTIL FIVE IN THE AFTERNOON. SOME CLASHES WITH THE POLICE CONTINUED AFTER THE ASSEMBLY ADJOURNED. LAT IN THE AFTERNOON, IT WAS CONFIDENTIAL

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STILL UNCERTAIN WHETHER THE ASSEMBLY WOULD IN FACT RECONVENE OR REMAIN ADJOURNED UNTIL THE FOLLOWING DAY. (ACCORDING TO THE LATEST REPORTS, DEMONSTRATORS OURN'T A CAR NEAR THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND MORE PROTESTERS WERE GATHERING IN THE NEARBY SAN MARTIN PLAZA.)

5. COMMENT: A LARGE PART OF THE CROWD IN THE GALLERIES AND THE PLAZA WERE APRISTAS LOUDLY CHEERING THEIR VICTORY. HOWEVER, THE HATRED OF RODRIGUEZ FIGUEROA MANIFESTED BY FOCEP SUPPORTERS (AND PROBABLY BY THE APRISTAS) TURNED A NOISY AND BOISTEROUS MEETING INTO A TRAGEDY. OBSERVERS THOUGH THAT POLICE WERE CONTROLLING THE SITUATION DURING THE AFTERNOON BUT VIOLENCE AND DISORDERS ARE SERIOUS ENOUGH TO CONCERN BOTH DELEGATES AND THE GOP. SUTEP AND FOCEP DEMONSTRATORS CONTINUED CAUSING PROBLEMS IN THE PLAZA AND AT THE NEARBY MINISTRIES OF ECONOMY AND FINANCE AND EDUCATION. THE FIRST TASK OF THE ASSEMBLY'S PREPARATORY COMMITTEE NOW SEEMS TO BE ARRANGING WITH GOP SOME WAY TO AVOID A REPETITION OF TODAY'S VIOLENCE.
SHLAUDEMAN

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